



Newsletter for I ndiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program

Volume 2 2001

<http://www.ai.org/dnr/lakemich/index.htm>

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Development of an I ndiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program

by Laurie Rounds, I DNR - Division of Water

The Department of Natural Resources invites you to participate in the development of an Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program (LMCP). A proposed plan for the LMCP, which incorporates locally identified priorities and is based on existing laws and programs, is available for public comments and review.

Three public input meetings are scheduled for the development of the LMCP:

Tuesday, June 26, 2001
Holiday Inn Michigan City
7:00- 9:00 p.m. CST

Wednesday, June 27, 2001
Wicker Park Highland
7:00- 9:00 p.m. CST

Thursday, June 28, 2001
Woodland Park Portage
7:00- 9:00 p.m. CST

History of Public I nput Through the DNR Coastal Coordination Program

The proposed LMCP reflects local priorities identified through the public input process lead by the Coastal Coordination Program. The Coastal Coordination Program was established by the Department of Natural Resources in 1993 and participated in several local initiatives in Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties. The Program also formed the Northwest Indiana Public Workgroups in February 1995. The work groups were organized to identify problems in the coastal area and potential solutions according to those that live in northwest Indiana. Four work groups were formed to establish a framework for discussion:

- 1) Industry, Ports, and Navigation
- 2) Marinas, Public Access, and Recreational Uses
- 3) Natural Resources, Shorelines, and Water Quality
- 4) Residential, Agricultural, and Commercial Development

The work groups held 25 meetings at which approximately 165 people volunteered to participate.

Based on a recommendation by the Public Work Groups, the DNR established a local committee in the summer of 1996. The DNR Director invited several citizens from Northwest Indiana to participate on a Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel, which includ-

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ed representatives from local government, citizens, business and industry, and the environmental community.

Overall, the work group and panel identified a myriad of issues pertaining to Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline and coastal area which are of concern to residents. Included were such diverse topics as water quality, private property rights, the preservation of natural areas and native species, governmental coordination and streamlining, recreation and access, brownfields and other issues pertaining to economic development, and air pollution.

The priorities identified by these groups were then incorporated into a Scoping Document, or draft plan, for the LMCP which is now available for public review by request or at <http://www.state.in.us/dnr/lakemich>

The LMCP describes how Indiana can address regional priorities through its existing management authorities without the creation of any new laws. The LMCP is based on Indiana's existing laws and policies and does not create any new bureaucracy. What the LMCP will encourage is a coordination of agency efforts and partnerships in the coastal area.

The Lake Michigan Coastal Program

What the Lake Michigan Coastal Program (LMCP) is:

The purpose of the LMCP is to support coordination and partnerships among local, state and federal agencies and local organizations to preserve, protect, restore, and where possible develop coastal resources in Indiana's Lake Michigan watershed. The LMCP is based on Indiana's existing laws.

What the LMCP is not:

The LMCP is not a zoning document. It is not a restrictive plan that threatens to take away local control from local communities. It does not create any new laws or bureaucracy.

Who participates in the program?

In cooperation with the public input process, many federal, state, and local agencies manage resources in the coastal region of Indiana. That will not change. The fundamental roles of these agencies will remain the same. What the LMCP will encourage is a coordination of agency efforts in the coastal region to streamline government processes. The LMCP will provide opportunities for federal, state, and local stakeholders to cooperatively identify priorities for the coastal region and to implement local projects to address those priorities.

What's in it for Us?

The most important outcome will be the protection and sustainable use of the natural and cultural resources in this vital Indiana region. The LMCP will enhance ecological, recreational, and economic opportunities for northwest Indiana and provide funding for a grants program to implement local projects.

The icing on the cake:

Development of the LMCP will make federal funds available to communities in northwest Indiana. It is estimated that Indiana will receive over \$600,000 annually to implement the LMCP and Coastal Grants Program.

Examples of how these funds might be used include:

- Protection and restoration of significant natural and cultural resources
- Programs to prevent the loss of life and property in coastal hazard areas

- Improved public access for recreational purposes
- Revitalized urban waterfronts and ports
- Improved coordination among government agencies in policy and decision-making processes
- Pollution prevention initiatives, including non-point source pollution, into coastal waters.

Who implements this program?

The lead agency to implement the LMCP is the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). This agency has taken a very active role in working with northwest Indiana governmental leaders and local residents to identify and address regional priorities.

Federal funding for state and local programs comes from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). In 2000, \$58 million was sent to states and territories to help implement coastal programs and deal with critical coastal areas.

Thirty-three of the thirty-five coastal states participate in the program. Of the remaining states that have coastlines, Indiana and Illinois are the only states that have not yet participated.

Local and State agencies and non-profit organizations would be eligible to apply for and receive funds from the Coastal Grants Program. A few examples of how other communities have used these funds in the past include:

- Low-cost construction projects such as dune walkovers and boat launches.
- Planning and creation of beach access points.
- Reinvigorating economically depressed waterfront areas.
- Preventing and monitoring beach erosion.
- Providing technical assistance on shore protection and bluff stabilization.

Development of an Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program Continued...

•Providing assistance for local planning in the coastal areas.

These are examples of how other states, local governments, and non-profit organizations have used their funds. The types of activities that can be funded are broadly defined and left to the creativity of the state and local governments, and organizations, as long as the goals of the LMCP are addressed.

What can you do to help?

IDNR is asking for your input, comments, and questions concerning the LMCP. Please attend the public meetings this Summer to submit your ideas on what should be in the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the LMCP. After the DEIS is written, the IDNR will ask for your participation in public meetings this Fall to discuss the contents of the plan. Your comments are a valuable part of this program development process.

For more information on the LMCP please contact:

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A New Wetlands Outreach Project is Underway in Indiana!

by Rebecca Fitzmaurice, D.J. Case & Associates

As part of the State's continuing efforts to fully implement the Indiana Wetlands Conservation Plan, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources recently established a two-year Wetlands Outreach Coordinator position. In January of 2001, a team consisting of D.J. Case & Associates, Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College, and J.F. New & Associates was awarded the contract for this position.

Funded through a Section 319 grant from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, the project will involve a number of activities of interest:

- A semi-annual wetlands newsletter
- An "Indiana wetlands" web site
- Assistance for local wetland conservation organizations
- Adopt-A-Wetland Program workshops
- Wetland conservation workshops for local wetland conservation groups
- Workshops for agencies, organizations, consulting firms, and others involved in wetland management.

The Adopt-A-Wetland workshops provide free training in the following areas to Hoosiers who want to help protect their local wetlands:

Wetland Birds & Wildlife
Amphibian Identification
Soils & Hydrology
Water Quality

The Indiana Adopt-A-Wetland Program was developed to help Hoosiers "adopt" or conserve the fascinating, valuable wetlands in their communities. Because 97 percent of the land in Indiana is privately owned, wetland conservation in Indiana is primarily accomplished by local, community-based groups that the Indiana Wetlands Conservation Plan refers to as focus areas. By adopting a wetland in your community, collecting important descriptive information about it, and communicating its values to other local citizens, you can help create your own focus area to protect your wetland.

At these free training workshops, you will learn how to collect important descriptive information about wetlands, and network with others who

are doing the same thing. Participants of each workshop will receive a binder of information pertaining to the topic being covered. This summer, the Wetland Project will be conducting training workshops on the topics "Wetland Birds & Wildlife" and "Soils & Hydrology." Next spring similar workshops are planned on the topics "Amphibian Identification" and "Water Quality."

If you are interested in learning more about these workshops, contact the new Wetlands Outreach Coordinator. Based on the number of people interested, workshop dates, locations, and registration information will be developed. Although there is no registration fee for these workshops, you must register in order to attend.

If you are interested in receiving project mailings (including the wetlands newsletter and workshop information), contact Jennifer Tennyson with D.J. Case & Associates at (219) 258-0100 or by email at Jennifer@djcase.com.

Little Calumet Headwaters Nature Preserve

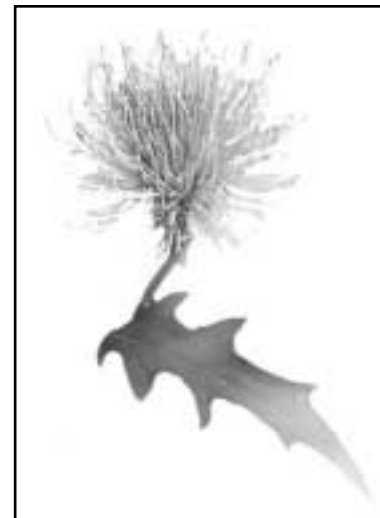


Spotted coralroot

Corallorrhiza maculata is an orchid found mainly in northern Indiana counties. It grows in black, and white oak woods.

Northwest Indiana welcomes two newly dedicated nature preserves, Wintergreen Woods Nature Preserve and Little Calumet Headwaters Nature Preserve. The protection of these unique parcels of land is important for rare plant species and for the restoration of historic boreal flatwoods.

LaPorte County Conservation Trust purchased the 23 acres of Wintergreen Woods, located near the intersection of 925N and 375W in LaPorte County. Vice President Bob Boklund said, "One of the neat things about the Southern Lake Michigan region is the combination of biomes, such as the North Woods complex." This nature preserve is home to a variety of native plant species, including many wetland types. In fact, the name was chosen after the abundant wintergreens found on the property. Future plans for the preserve include a natural trail system for public access as well as educational tours. President Dennis Richardson said that the Trust will work to see that Wintergreen Woods will continue to be preserved, the forest will recover to its natural habitat, and exotic plant species will be reduced. In addition, this property lies at the headwaters of the East Branch of Trail Creek and will be a positive contributor to the health of the river.



Swamp thistle

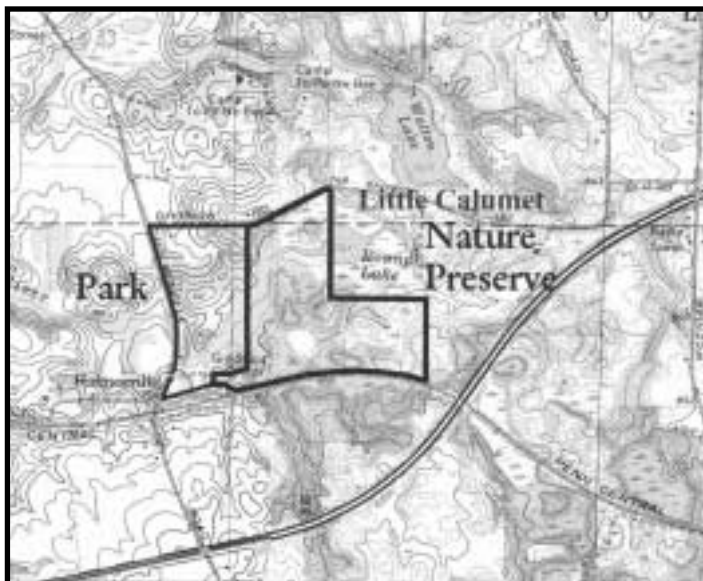
Cirsium muticum is found in bogs, marshes, swamps, and fens. It is not a common plant.



Bellwort

Uvularia grandiflora has yellow bell-shaped flowers. It brightens moist, thick woodlands.

LaPorte County



Beechdrops

Epifagus virginiana is parasitic on beech tree roots and does not grow without them.



Indian pipe

Monotropa uniflora

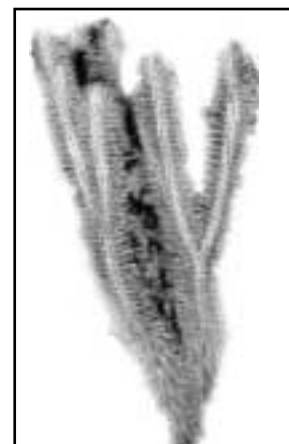
This unique white plant is a saprophyte. It is scattered throughout the state in black and white oak woods, but is seen infrequently.

Wintergreen Woods Nature Preserve

Little Calumet and Wintergreen Woods Continued...

LaPorte County is also home to the Little Calumet Headwaters Nature Preserve. This property is located east of Holmesville Rd. and is adjacent to Red Mill County Park.

The LaPorte County Parks Department will maintain the 108-acre nature preserve along with Red Mill County Park. Superintendent Tim Morgan called this partnership "the best of both worlds, where conservation and preservation are in the same package." Red Mill County Park will be the center of outdoor activities, such as fishing, biking, hiking, as well as the location of a park office. The nature preserve will have walking trails only. This preserve features hickory forests and wetlands, as well as the Little Calumet River. The public will be able to observe rare flora and fauna within the nature preserve, in 2002.



Shining club moss

Lycopodium lucidulum

Scattered through northern and southwest Indiana counties, this club moss is found in old bogs or in most, shaded woodlands.



Starflower

Trientalis borealis

A showy plant found only in the northern counties of Indiana in low, moist woods that border bogs and swamps.



LaPorte County

Furnessville Conservancy District

by Terri Swoveland, I DNR - Division of Water

The concept for Dunes Country at Furnessville began with the formation of the Dunes Country Partnership and the acquisition of 181.7 acres of property in Porter County, near the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. A plan was initiated for a new community that would showcase the land with its unique location and features. The desirability of the Dunes area, brought about by the recent economic growth experienced in the region, and a desire to offer people an alternative to conventional new housing developments are some of the primary reasons in developing a new community at Furnessville.

Site plans at Dunes Country at Furnessville incorporates several planning principles into the design, all aimed at creating a sustainable community of the highest quality. This community is planned for a variety of homes and places for businesses, shops, and services. A network of sidewalks, paths, and trails provide connections between every place within the community without needing to drive. Landscapes at the site will include restored dunes, prairies, and woodlands along with community gardens, parks, and

water features. Over 60 percent of the development will be reserved as open space.

Dunes Country will include a restoration of a healthy, native landscape that will help rebuild soil and develop habitat for birds, insects, and other animals essential for the health of the area. Community-supported organic agriculture will provide a healthy, local food source for residents while incorporating sustainable land management practices into the community. Residents living in the community will experience a landscape that is diverse, continually changing and renewing itself throughout the seasons.

Stormwater will be captured and returned to the ground using various infiltration techniques ranging from porous pavement design to shallow swales and depressions vegetated with deep-rooted native grasses and flowers. Rainwater will be collected in cisterns and used for supplemental irrigation for gardens and ornamental landscapes. Wastewater will be treated, filtered, disinfected, stored, and used for supplemental irrigation and nourishment of growing plants. On-site recycling, com-

posting of landscape waste, careful management of construction debris, and other techniques will be employed during construction and after to cycle nutrients on-site and to avoid misuse of waste products of any type.

The homes in this community will have porches and another architectural elements facing streets and public ways. To give a more pleasant pedestrian appeal, garages will be recessed, detached to rear yards, or facing private driveway courts. Buildings will be designed for improved indoor air quality through the use of appropriate materials and by arranging rooms and windows to maximize natural light and ventilation. Parks and gardens will be designed using indigenous plants to create a landscape local to this region to minimize maintenance and irrigation requirements and the application of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.

Establishment of a Conservancy District provides a vehicle by which landowners can organize a special taxing district to solve problems related to water resources management. Procedures and responsibilities of the

Conservancy Districts in Northwest Indiana

| County | Location | Name of District | Purpose |
|---------|--------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Lake | Merrillville | Independence Hill Conservancy District | Sewage, Drainage, and Flood Control |
| Lake | Gary | Lake Conservancy District | Sewage |
| Lake | Merrillville | Merrillville Conservancy District | Sewage |
| LaPorte | LaPorte | 39 North Conservancy District | Sewage and Water |
| LaPorte | LaPorte | Pine Lake Conservancy District | Sewage |
| LaPorte | LaPorte | Fish Lake Conservancy District | Drainage |
| Porter | Chesterton | Indian Boundary Conservancy District | Sewage |
| Porter | Hebron | Lake Eliza Conservancy District | Sewage, Drainage, and Water Supply |
| Porter | Portage | Twin Creeks Conservancy District | Flood Control and Drainage |
| Porter | Valparaiso | Valparaiso Lakes Area Conservancy District | Sewage, Drainage, and Water Supply |
| Porter | Wheeler | White Oak Conservancy District | Sewage, Drainage, and Water Supply |

Furnessville Conservancy District Continued...

Conservancy District can be found in Indiana Code 14-33. To form a district, a petition is circulated in the area to be included in the district and is filed in the Circuit Court of the County having the most land in the district. Any area may be included in a district however, the district needs to be contiguous with all other parts of the district. When the Circuit Court determines the petition contains the necessary signatures and is correct in form, the Court will refer the petition to the Natural Resources Commission who will conduct a fact-finding hearing. Staff from the IDNR, Division of Water provides a technical review of the petition for establishment to the Commission. Once the Circuit Court receives the Commission's findings, the Court will hold a hearing for the establishment of the district. After a conservancy district is formed a Board of Directors, is appointed by the County Commissioners to run the district. The freeholders of the district at annual meetings elect subsequent Boards. A Conservancy District will take approximately one year to establish and the costs can range from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

The Dunes Country Partnership filed a petition with the Porter Circuit Court to establish Furnessville Conservancy District. As directed by the Indiana Conservancy District Act a public hearing was held in Porter County on the proposed establishment. This District was ordered established on April 5, 2001, for 7 of the 9 purposes which include: 1) improving drainage, 2) providing for irrigation, 3) providing water supply, 4) providing treatment and collection of sewage, 5) developing forests, wildlife areas, parks, and recreational facilities, 6) preventing loss of topsoil from injurious water erosion, 7) operation, maintenance, and improvement of other works of the district.

New Projects Coordinator for the Lake Michigan Coastal Program

Please join the DNR in welcoming Jenny Kintzele as the new Projects Coordinator for the Lake Michigan Coastal Program. Jenny will contribute to the Coastal Program's efforts to develop a Coastal Grants Program and partnerships to address regional watershed priorities. By working with local agencies and organizations on watershed projects, Jenny will also serve as a local contact for the program. Her office is located at Indiana Dunes State Park and she can be reached at (219) 983-9912 or by e-mail at jkintzele@dnr.state.in.us.



Jenny was born in Michigan City, Indiana where she currently resides. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. Jenny worked for the DNR last Summer conducting water sampling for E. coli throughout the watershed. She has also work with Save The Dunes Conservation Fund on water quality sampling and other watershed projects. She enjoys living and working in Northwest Indiana and tries to enjoy outdoor activities as often as possible.

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Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program newsletter, "Shorelines", is a publication intended to provide information on issues that affect the Lake Michigan coastal region. Suggestions are welcome and can be submitted to:
coastal@dnr.state.in.us
or call 1-877-WATER55 (1-877-928-3755)
